



# MMA TIMES

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## What's Inside

MMA President's Report  
.....Page 2

USAMU Commander's  
Report .....Page 2

Coats Brown Legacy  
.....Page 3

Taps, Present Arms  
.....Page 4

KEEPING IN TOUCH  
.....Page 4

Conway Chronicles  
.....Page 4

AMU Ball 2009 Photos  
.....Page 5

Membership  
.....Page 6

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## MMA SOY Named at Annual Meeting

MMA



### MMA Soldier of the Year 2009!

MMA President Bob Hoidahl congratulates Sergeant Walton G. Eller III for being selected as the MMA Soldier of the Year for 2008. Eller was presented a .45 ACP pistol donated by Smith & Wesson.

**FORT BENNING, Georgia** - Sergeant Walton G. Eller III of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit was selected as the Military Marksmanship Association's Soldier of the Year for 2008. SGT Eller is assigned to the Shotgun Team and distinguished himself by winning the Olympic gold medal while setting two Olympic records in the International Double Trap event at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China. Additionally, he won a silver medal in the Beijing World Cup and was the U.S. National Double Trap Champion.

MMA President retired Colonel Robert I. Hoidahl, Jr., made the announcement at the MMA Annual Membership Meeting held January 22nd at the Pool International Shooting Complex. COL Hoidahl presented the Soldier of the Year Award to Eller — a caliber .45 ACP pistol donated by Smith & Wesson Corporation.

SGT Eller thanked the MMA for the award and thanked his teammates and coaches from the USAMU Shotgun Team and the gunsmiths of the USAMU Custom Firearms Shop for their support of him.

The MMA President also expressed his gratitude to Smith & Wesson Corporation for their continued support of the MMA Soldier of the Year program by their generous donation of the trophy pistol.

**USAMU Commander's Report**

LTC Frank Muggeo



This MMA news letter will be my last. While it seems to me like I just took command last week, two years have past. LTC Dan Hodne, an SF officer working at the Joint Staff in DC, will take command on 5 May. Dan will have the same task I did when I arrived; write an MMA news letter within 30 days of taking command.

That news letter started a trend for me of never having my newsletters in on time, thanks Carter Berry for your patience.

The professionalism of the Soldiers and staff in the AMU were evident to me from my first visit to the unit. The professionalism and drive of our Soldiers has remained a constant and has often times driven me to work harder. In the two years I have been the Commander of the AMU, there has never been a task that these Soldiers have shied away from. Their desire to prove themselves the best reaches past just competitions. Our Soldiers are sought out for their opinions on a variety of topics from throughout the DoD and civilians.

Currently AMU is deeply involved in marksmanship doctrine, Basic and Advanced Rifle Marksmanship instruction, research and development of small arms and ammunition, junior clinics that will prepare tomorrow's Soldiers and competitive shooters, and setting new records on the competitive field. They are doing all this while also preparing to start a deployment cycle in support of either Iraq or Afghanistan, a very ambitious and impressive schedule for a unit with less than 100 Soldiers.

I would like to thank you all for your assistance over the past few years. Members of the MMA have always had time to provide their guidance and recommendations to me and I appreciate it. Your support of the Soldiers in this unit is justified by their

**MMA President's Report**

Bob Hoidahl



Feels like I just paid my taxes and again, it's that time of year to pay the tax man.

**MMA Annual Membership Meeting:**

We conducted our annual membership meeting on January 22, 2009, at the Pool Indoor Range. About 100 members and guests attended the

meeting. Our organization remains in great shape for the future. I again thanked ALL the Executive Board Officers: Ron Martere, Vice President; Red Mosely, Secretary; Sam Hunter, Treasurer; Dick Rebidue, Membership; Steve Goff, Historian; Carter Berry, Editor-MMA Times; Bruce Meredith, Past President; and Phil Cannella, Refreshments, for a job "Well Done" for the year of 2008. Without their untiring support of our organization, we would not exist! Thanks guys. Nancy Pool won the door prize--a \$100 gift certificate from AAFES. Way to go Nancy!

**2008 MMA Soldier of the Year:** Congratulations to SGT Walton G. Eller III, Shotgun, for being recognized by MMA as the 2008 Soldier of the Year. SGT Eller distinguished himself by winning an Olympic gold medal while setting two Olympic records in the International Double Trap event at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China. Additionally, he won a silver medal in the Beijing World Cup and was the U.S. National Double Trap Champion. SGT Eller received a Smith & Wesson M1911 .45 caliber pistol donated by the Smith & Wesson Corporation for his accomplishments. See SOY article on the first page of this MMA Times issue or at the [www.militarymarksmanship.org](http://www.militarymarksmanship.org) web site.

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Yearbook:** You can still purchase the USAMU 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary book from the USAMU store for \$50 + shipping/handling. Red Mosely, our secretary, has attached a link on our MMA web site to place orders. "Better get'em, while we got'em."

## Coats Brown, A Legacy

Ken Hamill

*This series is about the life and times of a shooting legend who became the first Service Rifle Head Coach of USAMU in 1956. If you shot or worked with Coats Brown, please send any memories you have of those times to the Editor so the membership can share or relive them.*

**Camp Perry and Erie Ordnance Depot:** First Lieutenant and later Captain McNerney served as team adjutant during the summers of 1937 – 1940. He took care of all the administration, supply, personnel records and pay for the Infantry Team and the Service Detachment. Administrative and supply help was provided by a couple members of the Service Detachment. At Erie Ordnance Depot, letters were mailed at the Infantry Team Headquarters building. People noticed Coats penmanship. Captain McNerney asked Coats to make a certificate for a soldier due to be discharged. Coats had brought pen and ink, pencils and brushes and volunteered his services. It was not a distraction to his shooting. He could make one certificate in less than an hour and he enjoyed doing it. It became automatic in time, when a certificate was needed, Coats was asked to make it. The U.S. Cavalry Team also lived on Erie Ordnance Depot and trained at Camp Perry. The Artillery Team trained at Fort Sill. The Engineer Team trained at Fort Belvoir. The Marines trained at Quantico and Camp Curtis Guild near Boston. Prior to World War II, the national matches were conducted by the Army. A regiment was sent to Camp Perry to support the matches. Camp Perry ranges encompassed a larger area then. A unique feature was the large apple tree that flourished while located directly on the center of the 1000 yard firing line. The north side of Erie Ordnance Depot did not extend to Lake Erie. The ranges extended along the beach from the Camp Perry Clubhouse to the west for at least one-mile. All the shooting disciplines competed in the same time frame. Pistol shot on the western end of the range complex in an area called Hogans Alley. Smallbore rifle shot in the center area of the range complex. High power rifle shot on the east end of the complex where the four ranges exist today. Erie Ordnance Depot claimed Hogans Alley and the smallbore ranges at the start of World War II. There were hundreds of shooters, requiring numerous relays in all the disciplines. The hotels of Port Clinton, Toledo, Sandusky and Fremont were full of shooters. All of the military services shot the

National Matches. A week long small arms firing school was conducted just prior to the National Matches. Service members taught civilians, ROTC, etc. Everyone was allowed to compete in the national individual matches. However in the National Trophy Team (NTT) Match, only one team was allowed to represent each branch of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Coast Guard. One state team was allowed to enter the NTT match representing those states National Guard, Reserve, Civilian, CMTC and ROTC organizations. Each team was comprised of ten firing members, two alternates, a captain and a coach. Each team member fired the national match course, which consisted of 60 shots; 10 shots standing slowfire at 200 yards, 10 shots rapid-fire sitting 200 yards, 10 shots rapid-fire prone 300 yards, 10 shots slowfire prone 600 yards and 20 shots slowfire prone 1000 yards. Each team had one firing point. Pair firing was allowed for standing and the long ranges. Ten rapid-fire strings, plus alibi relays were ran 200 sitting and 300 prone. Infantry Trophy was different then also. A squad of 8 men, including 1 BAR man and 7 rifleman formed an infantry trophy team. Teams formed on line 25 feet behind the 800-yard line. A whistle was blown and the teams walked on line toward the firing line. A second whistle blast signaled the targets to be raised and the teams to assume the prone position and commence firing. Each man fired on a designated large silhouette target. One hit on a target caused the target to be lowered. When ready, the teams were formed on line and a whistle started them walking downrange. The whistle blast and firing procedure was repeated at the 700, 600, 500, 400, 300 and 200 yard lines. At the 300 and 200 yard lines, the BAR man was allowed to fire on as many targets as he was capable of firing at. Scoring points were received for the number of targets hit, with a bonus for the number of unfired rounds saved. Coats was usually the BAR man during infantry trophy. He could make the Browning Automatic Rifle talk. There was less emphasis on safety those days. There were no berms separating the various ranges. A flat wide open space much like the four ranges of Camp Perry were the norm on military installations. The berms on McAndrew and Easley Ranges were added during or after WWII. There was no command to place their rifles on safe prior to moving, or prior to loading for a live fire string. The soldiers and all shooters automatically placed their rifles on safe and disengaged the safety when appropriate without command.

**PRESIDENT** / From Page 2

**USAMU Ball:** The 2d annual USAMU Ball was held at the Columbus Iron Works on January 23, 2009. It was a huge success! All MMA participants enjoyed the food and fellowship. It's good to see that the Army can still put on a good social event!

**New MMA Life Members:** I would like to recognize our newest MMA Life members: Richard F. Hopp, Custom Firearms Shop and two Service Rifle shooters, Jeffrey E. Larosa and Robert Lee Meeks. Thanks for your commitment and dedication to your association. Hooah!

**COMMANDER** / From Page 2

professionalism and performance and I thank you for this as well. I will remember my time here as the AMU Commander as one of the most important jobs I have had in my career.

**TAPS, PRESENT ARMS**

**Helen Blankenship** died February 9, 2009 in Columbus, Georgia. Helen was the wife of USAMU pistol shooter and Military Marksmanship Association Past President SGM (Ret) **William B. "Bill" Blankenship**.

**Conway Chronicles**

Francis B. Conway

**Sight In Days:** A very common type question, "If I am hitting 2-1/2 inches high" at 25 yards, where will it hit at 300 yards? This is a question with just about an impossible answer. Different calibers, bullet weights, loadings and the height of the scope above the bore are all factors. If you sight in at the longer ranges, 200-300 yards, the error at 25 yards is insignificant for any practical hunting situation.

**KEEPING IN TOUCH**

Happy 90<sup>th</sup> birthday wishes to: **Frank B. Conway** (February 7th) and **Forest R. Smith** (February 25th).

Former service rifle shooter **Bruce Reynolds** wrote, "I was stationed with Mosely, Grant, Heugatter, Conway, Waterman, and Maples in the 60's at the USAEUR MTU in Grafenwöhr, Germany. After I left the service, I joined the Marketing Department of Remington Arms Company and worked with Tom Sharpe for many years until his passing. I ran the Remington Gun Club, the oldest combination Trap and Skeet Club in North America, until I took early retirement and moved to the great North Woods of Maine. Now, I'm finishing out my years in Law Enforcement.



USAMU nominees for MMA Soldier of the Year (left to right): Staff Sergeant Adams, Custom Firearms, Sergeant McPhail, International Rifle, Sergeant Eller, Shotgun, Specialist Balsley, International Pistol, Staff Sergeant Henderson, Service Pistol, and Sergeant Cooper, Service Rifle. Not shown is Staff Sergeant Tomasie, Action Shooting, who was not able to attend.



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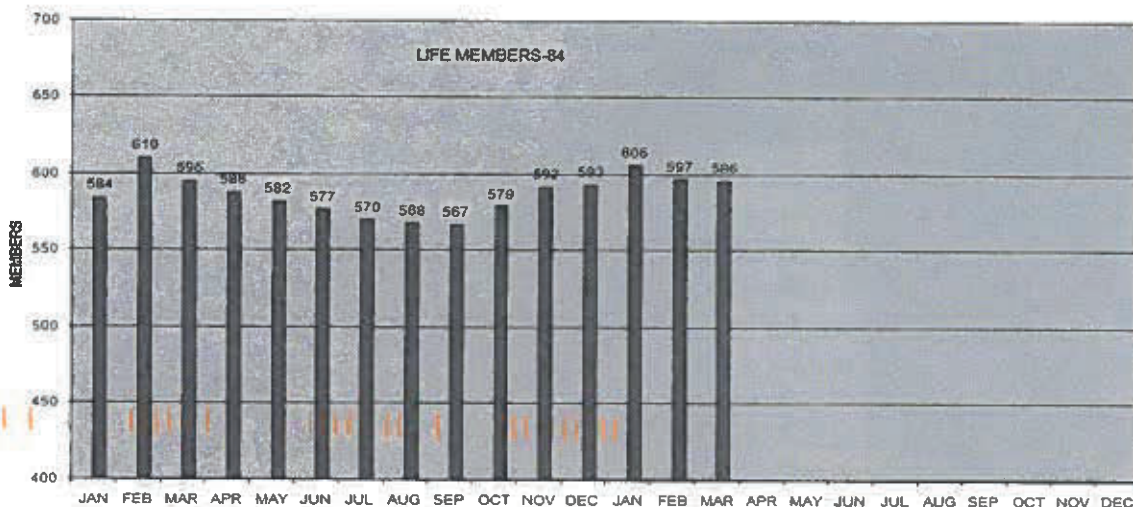
### NEW LIFE MEMBERS!

Richard F. Hopp  
Jeffrey E. Larosa  
Robert L. Meeks

### Welcome New Members !

Mark D. Giddens      Matthew S. Sawallis  
Charles W. Watson      Michael J. Badger  
Billy C. Hankins      Joseph A. Hein  
James T. Lamm

MEMBERSHIP 2008-2009



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